

THE BROCHURE SERIES

OF ARCHITECTURAL ILLUSTRATION.

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MOSQUE OF AYA SOFIA, CONSTANTINOPLE.

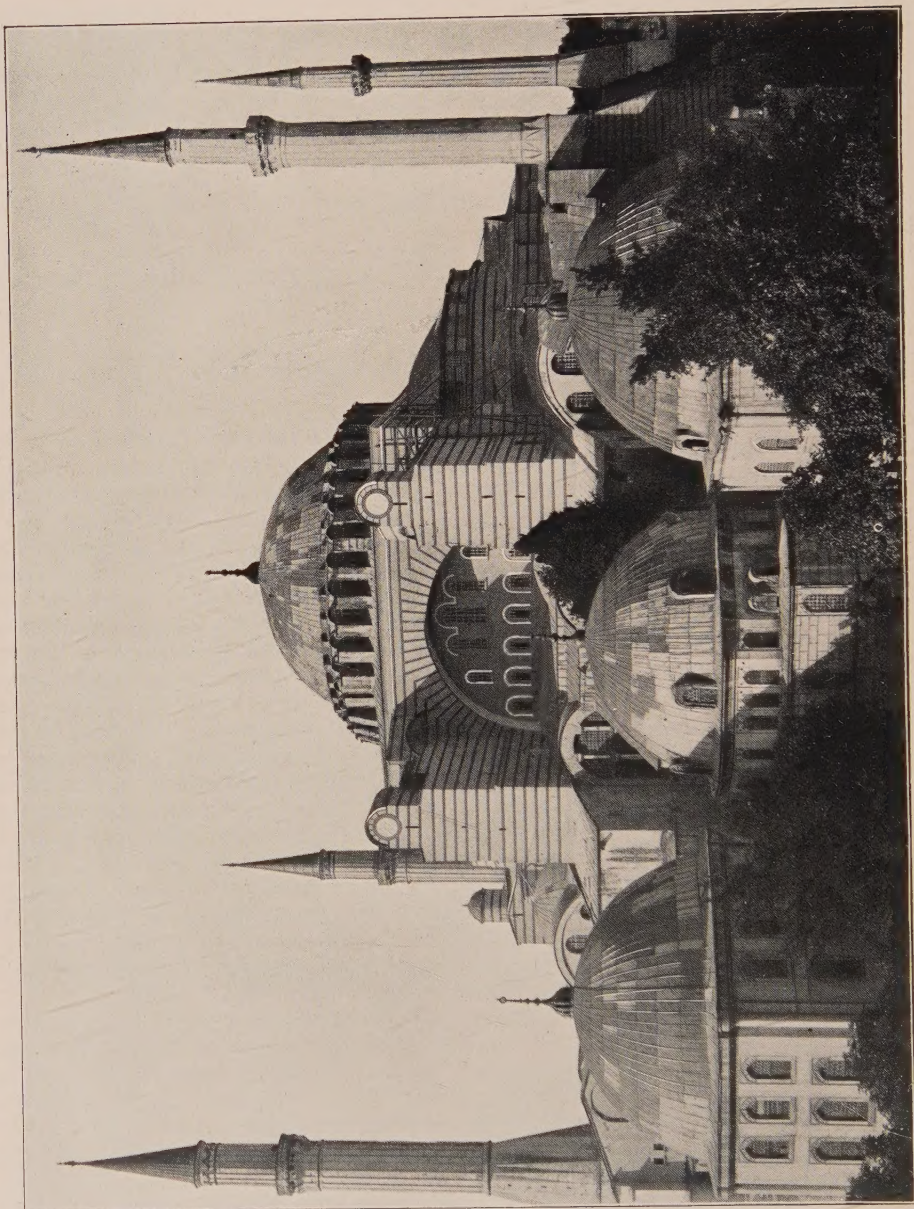
THE external aspect has nothing worthy of note. The only objects that attract the eye are the four high white minarets that rise at the four corners of the edifice, upon pedestals as big as houses. The famous cupola looks small. It appears impossible that it can be the same dome that swells into the blue air, like the head of a Titan, and is seen from Pera, from the Bosphorous, from the Sea of Marmora, and from the hills of Asia. It is a flattened dome, flanked by two half domes, covered with lead, and perforated with a wreath of windows, supported upon four walls painted in stripes of pink and white, sustained in their turn by enormous bastions, around which rise confusedly a number of small mean buildings, baths, schools, mausoleums, hospitals, etc., which hide the architectural forms of the basilica. You see nothing but a heavy, irregular mass, of a faded color, naked as a fortress, and not, to all appearance, large enough to hold within it the immense nave of Aya Sofia's church. Of the ancient basilica nothing is really visible but the dome, which has lost the silvery splendor that once made it visible, according to the Greeks, from the summit of Olympus. All the rest is Mussulman. One summit was built by Mahomet the Conqueror, one by Selim II., the other two by Amurath III. Of the same Amurath are the buttresses,

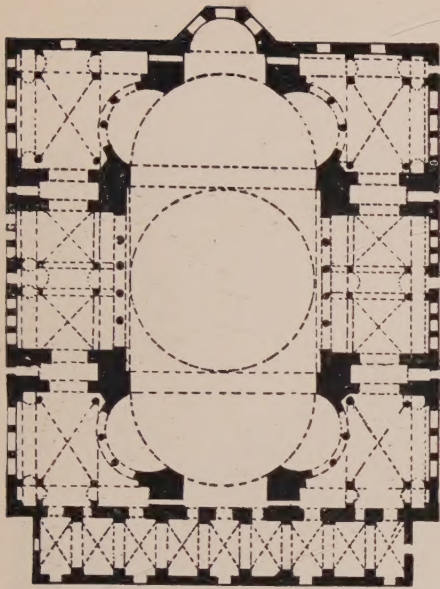
built at the end of the sixteenth century to support the walls shaken by an earthquake, and the enormous crescent in bronze planted upon the top of the dome, of which the gilding alone cost fifty thousand ducats.

On every side the mosque overwhelms and masks the church, of which the head only is free, though over that also the four imperial minarets keep watch and ward. On the eastern side there is a door ornamented by six columns of porphyry and marble; at the southern side another door by which you enter a court, surrounded by low, irregular buildings, in the midst of which bubbles a fountain for ablution, covered by an arched roof with eight columns. Looked at from without, Aya Sofia can scarcely be distinguished from the other mosques of Stamboul, unless by its inferior lightness and whiteness; much less would it pass for the "greatest temple in the world after Saint Peter's."

Between the four enormous pilasters, which form a square in the middle of the basilica, rise, to the right and left as you enter, eight marvellous columns of green *breccia* from which spring the most graceful arches, sculptured with foliage, forming an elegant portico on either side of the nave, and sustaining at a great height two vast galleries, which present two more ranges of columns and sculptured arches. A third gallery, which communicates with the two first, runs along the entire side where the entrance is, and opens upon the nave with three great arches, sustained by twin columns. Other minor galleries, sup-

NOTE.—The title of "Santa Sophia" commonly given to this mosque is a misnomer. The Greek name does not refer to a saint at all, but means Immortal, or Divine Wisdom.





AYA SOFIA

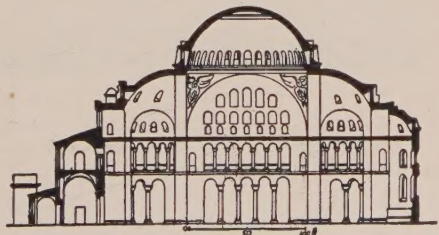
PLAN

ported by porphyry columns, cross the four temples posted at the extremity of the nave and sustain other columns bearing tribunes. This is the basilica. The mosque is, as it were, planted in its bosom and attached to its walls. The *Mirab*, or niche which indicates the direction of Mecca, is cut in one of the pilasters of the apse. To the right of it and high up is hung one of the four carpets which Mahomet used in prayer. Upon the corner of the apse, nearest the *Mirab*, at the top of a very steep little staircase, flanked by two balustrades of marble sculptured with exquisite delicacy, under an odd conical roof, between two triumphal standards of Mahomet Second, is the pulpit where the *Ritab* goes up to read the Koran, with a drawn scimitar in his hand, to indicate that Aya Sofia is a mosque acquired by conquest. Opposite the pulpit is the tribune of the Sultan, closed with a gilded lattice. Other pulpits or platforms, furnished with balustrades sculptured in open work, and ornamented with small marble columns and arabesque arches, extend here and there along the walls, or project towards the centre of the nave. To the right and left of the entrance are two enormous alabaster urns, brought from the ruins of Pergamo by Amurath III. Upon the pilasters, at a great height, are suspended immense green disks, with inscriptions from the Koran in

letters of gold. Underneath, attached to the walls, are large cartouches of porphyry inscribed with the names of Allah, Mahomet, and the first four Caliphs. In the angles formed by the four arches that sustain the cupola, may still be seen the gigantic wings of four mosaic cherubim, whose faces are concealed by gilded rosettes. From the vaults of the domes depend innumerable thick silken cords, to which are attached ostrich eggs, bronze lamps, and globes of crystal. Here and there are seen lecterns, inlaid with mother-of-pearl and copper, with manuscript Korans upon them. The pavement is covered with carpets and mats. The walls are bare, whitish, yellowish or dark grey, still ornamented here and there with faded mosaics. The general aspect is gloomy and sad.

The chief marvel of the mosque is the great dome. Looked at from the nave below, it seems indeed, as Madame de Staël said of the dome of Saint Peter's, like an abyss suspended over one's head. It is immensely high, has an enormous circumference, and its depth is only one-sixth of its diameter; which makes it appear still larger. At its base a gallery encircles it, and above the gallery there is a row of forty arched windows. In the top is written the sentence pronounced by Mahomet Second, as he sat on his horse in front of the high altar on the day of the taking of Constantinople: "Allah is the Light of Heaven and of Earth"; and some of the letters, which are white upon a black ground, are nine yards long. As every one knows, this aerial prodigy could not be constructed with the usual materials; and it was built of pumice-stone that floats on water, and with bricks from the island of Rhodes, five of which scarcely weigh as much as one ordinary brick. . . .

When you have visited the nave and the dome, you have only begun to see Aya



AYA SOFIA

SECTION



Sofia. For example, whoever has a shade of historic curiosity may dedicate an hour to the columns. Here are the spoils of all the temples in the world. The columns of green *breccia* which support the two great galleries, were presented to Justinian by the magistrates of Ephesus, and belonged to the Temple of Diana that was burned by Erostratus. The eight porphyry columns that stand two and two between the pilasters belonged to the Temple of the Sun built by Aurelian at Balbek. Other columns are from the Temple of Jove at Cizicum, from the Temple of Helios of Palmyra, from the temples of Thebes, Athens, Rome, the Troad, the Cielades, and from Alexandria; and they present an infinite variety of sizes and colors. Among the columns, the balustrades, the pedestals, and the slabs which remain of the ancient lining of the walls, may be seen marbles from all the ruins of the Archipelago; from Asia Minor, from Africa and from Gaul. The marble of the Bosphorus, white spotted with black, contrasts with the black Celtic marble veined with white; the green marble of Laconia is reflected in the azure marble of Lybia; the speckled porphyry of Egypt, the starred granite of Thessaly, the red and white striped stone of Jassy, mingle their colors with the purple of the Phrygian marble, the rose of that of Synada, the gold of the marble of Mauritania, and the snow of the marble of Paros.

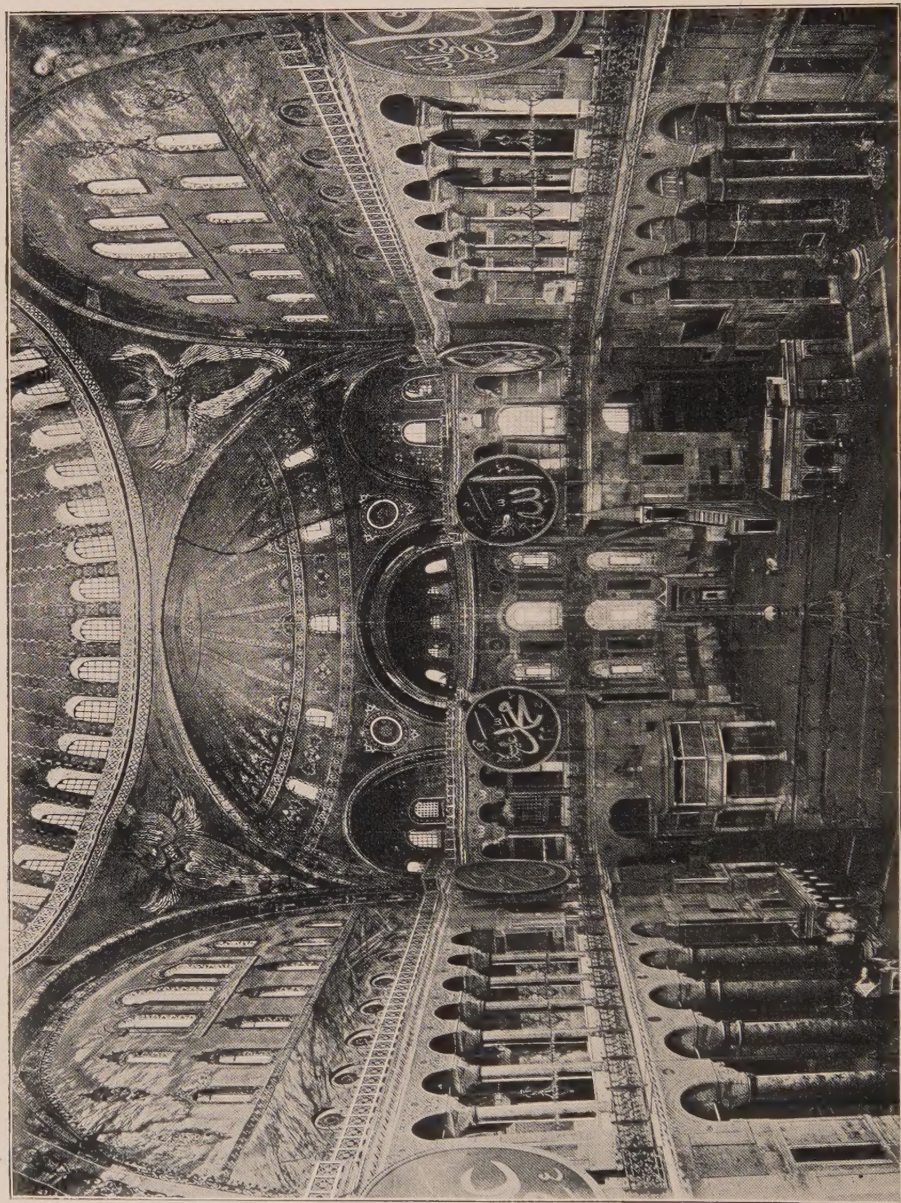
From above can be surveyed at once with the eye and mind all the life of the mosque. There are to be seen Turks on their knees, with their foreheads touching the pavement; others erect like statues with their hands before their faces, as if they were studying the lines in their palms; some seated cross-legged at the base of columns, as if they were reposing under the shadow of trees; a veiled woman on her knees in a solitary corner; old men seated before the lecterns, reading the Koran; an *imaum* hearing a group of boys reciting sacred verses; and here and there, under the distant arcades and in the galleries, *imaum*, *ratib*, *muezzin*, servants of the mosque, in strange costumes, coming and going silently as if they did not touch the pavement. The vague harmony formed by the low, monotonous voices of those reading or praying, those thousand strange lamps, that clear and equal light, that deserted apse, those vast silent galleries,

that immensity, those memories, that peace, leave in the soul an impression of mystery and grandeur which words cannot express, nor time efface. — EDMONDO DE AMICIS, "*Constantinople*."

THE magnificent church of Aya Sofia was built by Anthemius of Tralles and Isodorus of Miletus, under Justinian, 532-538 A. D. In the plan of this marvelous edifice the dome rests upon four mighty arches bounding a square, into two of which open the half-domes of semi-circular apses. These apses are penetrated and extended each by two smaller niches and a central arch, and the whole vast nave, measuring over two hundred by one hundred feet, is flanked by enormously wide aisles connecting at the front with a majestic narthex. *Huge transverse buttresses, as in the Basilica of Constantine (with whose structural design this building shows striking affinities), divide the aisles each into three sections. Thus was secured a noble and unobstructed hall of unrivalled proportions and great beauty, covered by a combination of half-domes increasing in span and height as they lead up successively to the stupendous central vault, which rises one hundred and eighty feet into the air and fifty crowns the whole. The imposing effect of this low-curved but loftily-poised dome, resting as it does upon a crown of windows, and so disposed that its summit is visible from every point of the nave (as may be seen from an examination of the section), is not surpassed in any interior ever erected.

The two lateral arches under the dome are filled by clear-story walls pierced by twelve windows, and resting on arcades in two stories carried by magnificent columns taken from ancient ruins. These separate the nave from the side-aisles, which are in two stories forming galleries, and are vaulted with a remarkable variety of groined vaults. All the masses are disposed with studied reference to the resistance required by the many and complex thrusts exerted by the dome and other vaults. That the earthquakes of one thousand three hundred and fifty years have not destroyed the church is the best evidence of the sufficiency of these precautions.

Not less remarkable than the noble planning and construction of this church was



the treatment of scale and decoration in its interior design. It was as conspicuously the masterpiece of Byzantine architecture as the Parthenon was of the classic Greek. With little external beauty, it is internally one of the most perfectly composed and beautifully decorated halls of worship ever erected. Instead of the simplicity of the Pantheon it displays the complexity of an organism of admirably related parts. The division of the interior height into two stories below the spring of the four arches, reduces the component parts of the design to moderate dimensions, so that the scale of the whole is more easily grasped and its vast size emphasized by the contrast. The walls are incrustated with precious marbles up to the spring of the vaulting; the capitals, spandrels and soffits are richly and minutely carved with incised ornament, and all the vaults covered with splendid mosaics. Dimmed by the lapse of centuries and disfigured by the vandalism of the Moslems, this noble interior, by the harmony of its coloring and its impressive grandeur, is one of the masterpieces of all time. — A. D. F. HAMLIN, "*History of Architecture.*"

Few buildings in the world inspire more solemn or thrilling thoughts than this church of Justinian. It witnessed the coronations of the Byzantine Emperors for nearly a thousand years; it witnessed the solemn mass by which the Cardinal Legate of the Pope celebrated the union, so long striven for, and so soon dissolved, of the Greek and Latin Churches; and it witnessed the terrible death-scene of the Byzantine Empire. On the 29th of May, 1453, the Sultan Mohammed II. marshalled his hosts for the last assault upon besieged Constantinople. The thunder of his cannon was heard over the doomed city, striking terror into its people, and, while the battle raged upon the walls, a vast crowd of priests, women, children, and old men gathered in Aya Sofia, hoping that the sanctity of the place would be some protection if the worst befell, and praying the help of God and the saints in this awful hour. Before noon the walls were stormed. The Emperor, who had fought like a true successor of Constantine, fell under a heap of slain, and the Turkish warriors burst into the city, and dashed like a roaring wave along the streets, driving the fugitive Greeks before them.

Making straight for Aya Sofia, they flung themselves upon the unresisting crowd; men were slaughtered—others, and with them the women and children, were bound with cords and driven off in long files into captivity; the altars were despoiled, the pictures torn down, and before night fell every trace of Christianity that could be reached had been destroyed. They still show on one of the columns a mark which is said to have been made by the Sultan's blood-smeared hand as he smote it in sign of possession, and shouted aloud, with a voice heard above the din, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his Prophet!" — JAMES BRYCE, "*Constantinople.*"

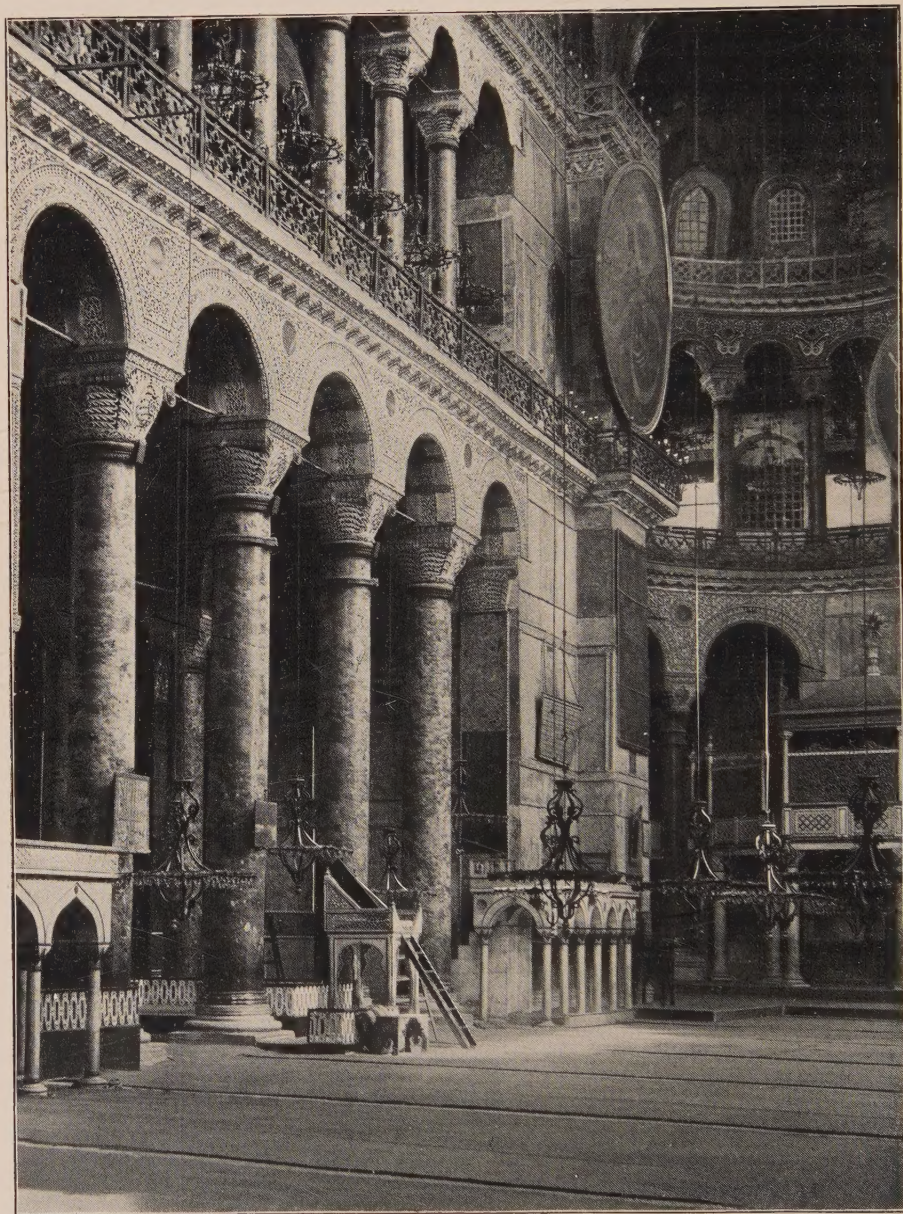
The Ten Most Beautiful Buildings in the United States.

BROCHURE SERIES COMPETITION "O."

In December last THE BROCHURE SERIES printed a list of façades, which, by a voted consensus of opinion, its readers had named as those which they considered to be the most beautiful in the world. The compilation of this list and the subsequent discussion of it by a number of eminent architects proved to be one of the most, if not *the* most, interesting Competition which THE BROCHURE has heretofore been able to propose to its readers. On the advertising page facing the inside cover of this issue, a similar voting Competition is announced, which propounds, for solution in the same way, what it is confidently hoped will prove an even more attractive question than the former, namely: "What are the ten most beautiful buildings now existing in the United States?"

Beside being national rather than general, this question is one on which the independent judgment of the voter will have freer play because less influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the "judgment of the years." ("I wish I dared," wrote a voter in the former contest, "to omit the Parthenon from my list"; and it is probable that many others had similar feelings.)

The suggestive value of this list of the most beautiful buildings now existing in America will be greatly enhanced because it will be possible to compare it with a list made under very similar conditions, fourteen years ago. In 1885 the readers of *The American Architect* were invited to vote on this very question; and named, by consensus, as their choice of the then most beautiful buildings in America, the following ten:—



I. TRINITY CHURCH, BOSTON. Messrs. Gambrel & Richardson, Architects.

II. UNITED STATES CAPITOL, WASHINGTON, D.C. Messrs. Hallet, Hadfield, Hoban, Latrobe, Bulfinch, Walter and Clark, Architects.

III. HOUSE OF W. K. VANDERBILT, NEW YORK. Mr. R. M. Hunt, Architect.

IV. TRINITY CHURCH, NEW YORK. Mr. Richard Upjohn, Architect.

V. JEFFERSON MARKET COURT-HOUSE, NEW YORK. Mr. F. C. Withers, Architect.

VI. STATE CAPITOL, HARTFORD, CONN. Mr. R. M. Upjohn, Architect.

VII. CITY HALL, ALBANY, N.Y. Mr. H. H. Richardson, Architect.

VIII. SEVER HALL, CAMBRIDGE, MASS. Mr. H. H. Richardson, Architect.

IX. STATE CAPITOL, ALBANY, N.Y. Messrs. [Fuller,] Eidlitz and Richardson, Architects.

X. TOWN-HALL, NORTH EASTON, MASS. Mr. H. H. Richardson, Architect.

A comparison of this fourteen-year-old list with that which will result from Competition "O" should suggest some significant architectural questions, — the general trend of architecture since that time; the rise and wane of architectural fashions; what buildings included in the older classifica-

tion bid fair to stand the test of time, etc., — and should, moreover, throw some light on those subjects, lately so much discussed, as to along what lines American architecture is now tending, what our present architectural ideals are, and what progress we are making, if we are making any, toward the development of a national style.

If all the readers of THE BROCHURE SERIES are not architects, they may all be reckoned as students and lovers of architecture; and the list resulting from Competition "O" will be the expression of an informed judgment which the general public, at present keenly aware of uncertain opinions, will welcome with lively interest.

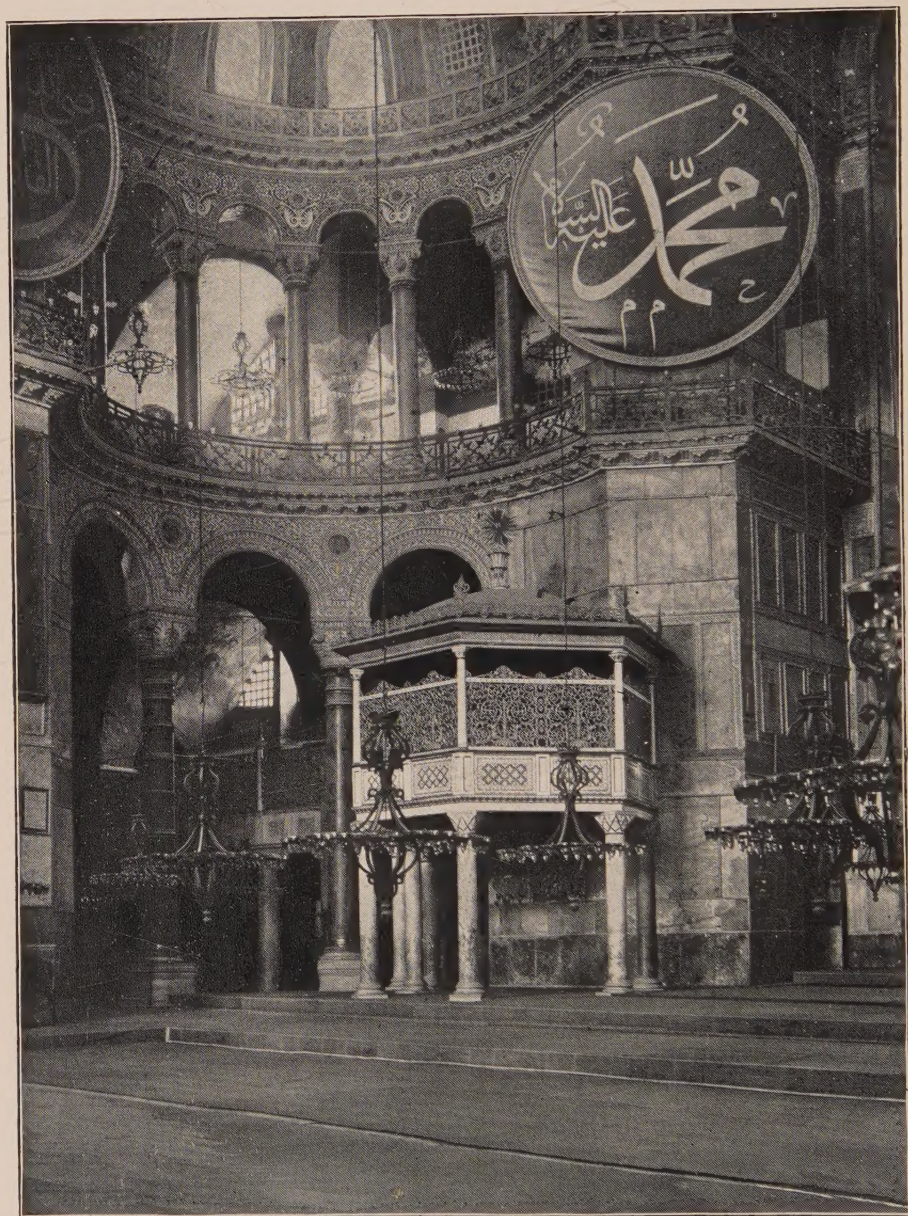
It is to be hoped that THE BROCHURE'S readers will find this Competition of sufficient interest to make the number of votes an unusually large one; for the greater the number, the more representative and valuable the resulting list will be. Full details as to the method of voting, the prizes, etc., will be found in the announcement above referred to.

English Country Places

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWARD STURGIS



CASTLE BROMWICH

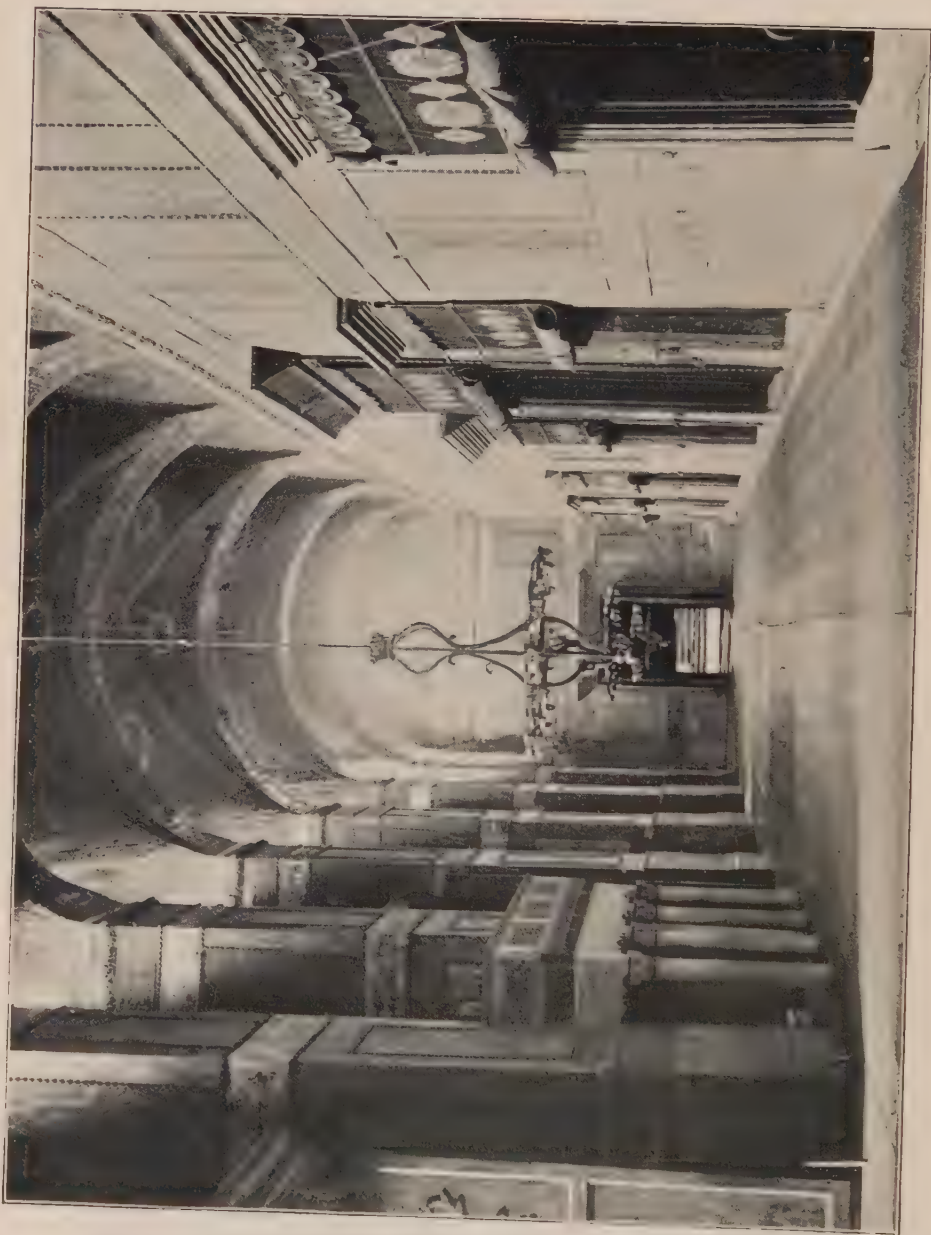




CASTLE BROMWICH



MONKSHATCH





HUNTERCOMBE



MRS. EARLE'S HOUSE

